

The French Revolution

"Conservative" Phase:

The Directory



1795- 1799



The “Thermidorian Reaction”

- ✓ Curtailed the power of the Committee for Public Safety.
- ✓ Closed the Jacobin Clubs.
- ✓ Churches were reopened.
 - 1795 → freedom of worship for all cults was granted.
- ✓ Economic restrictions were lifted in favor of laissez-faire policies.
- ✓ August, 1795 → a new Constitution is written
 - more conservative republicanism.

Characteristics of the Directory

1795-1799

- ✓ The Paris Commune was outlawed.
- ✓ The Law of 22 Prairial was revoked.
- ✓ People involved in the original Terror were now attacked → **“White” Terror**
- ✓ Inflation continues.
- ✓ Rule by rich bourgeois liberals.
- ✓ Self-indulgence → frivolous culture; salons return; wild fashions.
- ✓ Political corruption.
- ✓ Revival of Catholicism.

The Government Structure of the New Directory

- ✓ 5-man executive committee or **oligarchy** [to avoid a dictatorship].
- ✓ Tried to avoid the dangers of a one-house legislature.
 - **Council of 500** → initiates legislation.
 - **Council of Elders** [250 members] → married or widowed males over 40 years of age.
 - They accepted or rejected the legislation.
 - Both houses elected by electors who owned or rented property worth 100-200 days' labor [limited to 30,000 voters].
 - The electors were elected by all males over 21 who were taxpayers.

Political Instability: 1795-1796

💣 April, 1795 → Inflation; bread riots.

💣 October, 1795 :

- Vendée and Brittany revolted.
- Military suppressed them.

💣 May, 1796 → First
“**communist**” revolt-

💣 Led by **Gracchus Babeuf** and
the **Conspiracy of Equals**”

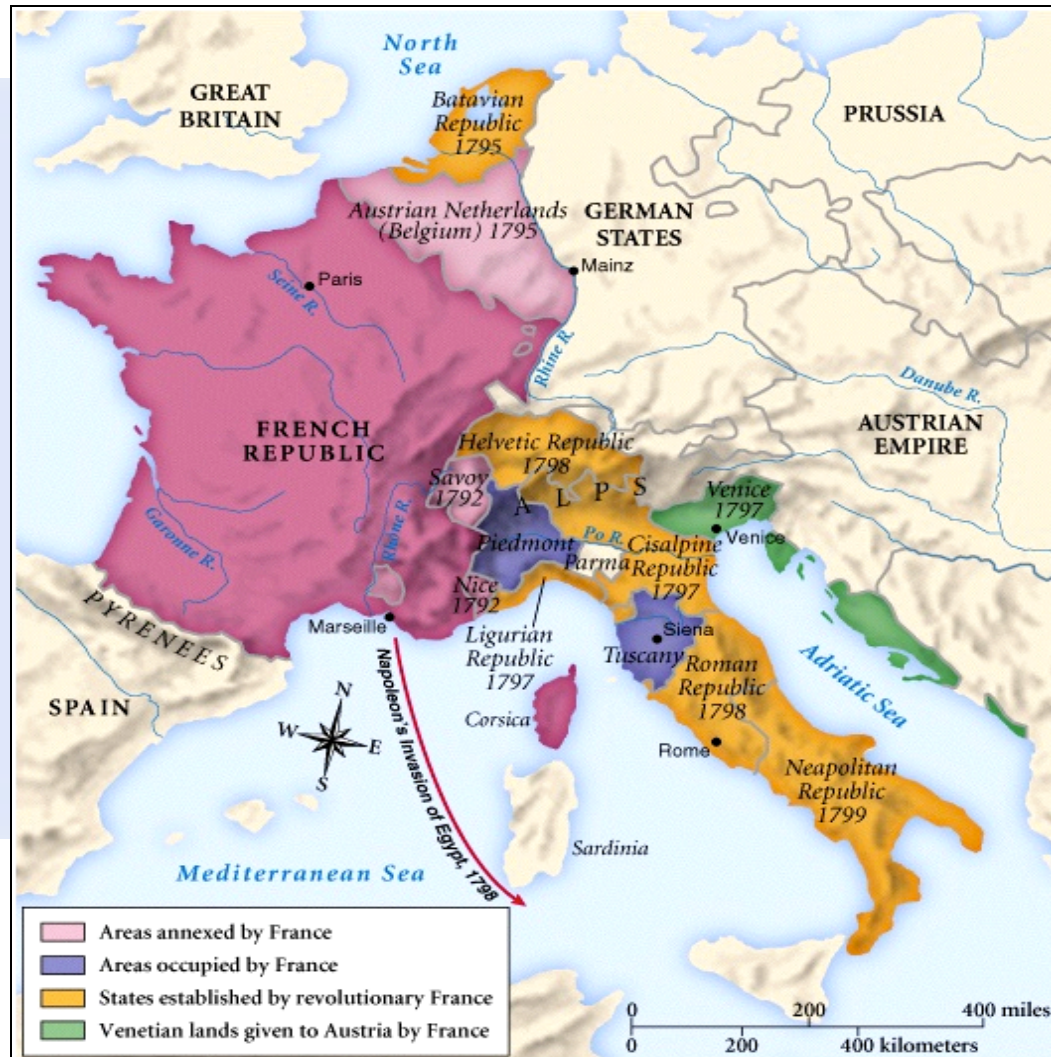
💣 **He believed in** no private property-He was
executed in 1797



Napoleon

- Brigadier General by 1794
- Had captured (with army) Austrian Netherlands-1793 (Belgium) and parts of Austrian Italy
- By 1795 all of The Netherlands are under French control-renamed ***Batavian Republic***
- Returned to France a conquering hero
- Given command of an army to invade England.
- England would continue to be France's mortal enemy!

French Expansion: 1791-1799



Austrian Losses to France in Napoleonic Wars

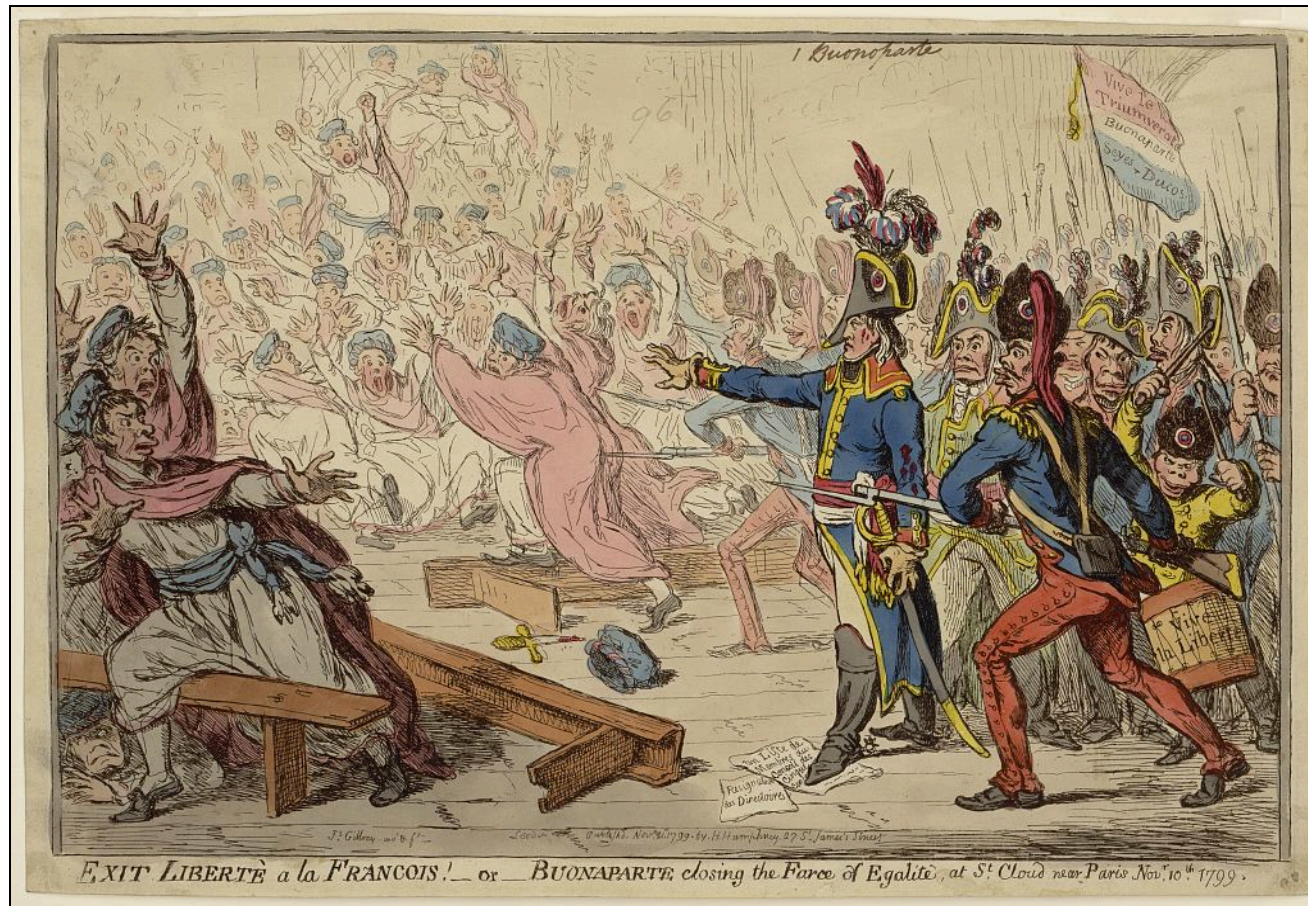


18 Brumaire (Nov. 9, 1799)

- 💣 *Coup d'état* by Napoleon.
- 💣 Approved by a plebiscite in December.
- 💣 Abbe Sieyès: *Confidence from below; authority from above.*



A British Cartoon about Napoleon's Coup in 1799





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